



# Nurture Policy

**The status of the policy:**

Final

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the aims and principle of our Nurture Group and how we will implement this and monitor its effectiveness.

**Consultation:**

staff, governors

**Links with other policies:**

- Whole school vision statement
- Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Behaviour & Anti Bullying

**Monitoring and evaluation:**

This policy will be monitored and evaluated by the SENDCo.

**Date established by governing body:**

12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Date for full implementation:**

1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

**Date for review:**

September 2024

## **Introduction**

The Nurture Group is a supportive and safe learning environment, which often benefits children with early attachment difficulties or challenging emotional experiences to thrive. The provision enables identified key stage one children to have an environment outside of the normal classroom environment to develop self-esteem, emotional regulation, social skills and improved listening and communication skills. By developing these skills, it enables the children to immerse themselves in to school life and make the most of learning opportunities. The children are supported by qualified Nurture Practitioners.

The Nurture Group is run on the Six Principles of Nurture:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development of self esteem
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in the lives of children and young people.

### **1. Purpose/aim of the Nurture Group**

- To provide a flexible and preventative resource which is responsive to the particular needs of the children attending the school.
- To provide ongoing assessment and support for children showing signs of emotional stress, social challenges and communication difficulties, with the aim of enabling the child to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.
- To provide a secure and reliable environment where children can learn by re-experiencing pre-school nurture from caring adults who actively work towards their successful inclusion in their mainstream class.
- To help children to learn to develop and regulate their emotions, use their curiosity constructively, improve their self-esteem and develop confidence through close and trusting relationships with adults.
- To work in partnership with class teachers and parents to enable consistency of approach, both at home and at school.

### **2. Description**

- Nurture Groups are a unique, preventative resource based on well documented psychological theory and research.
- The Nurture Group is based in a dedicated classroom with a home-like area, role-play and an area for adult-lead activities/learning.
- Children will attend for a maximum period of up to four terms four afternoons a week.
- There will be a maximum of 8 children in the Nurture Group at any one time.
- The children will be on the register of their mainstream class and they will join their class for the core subjects and other appropriate activities.
- The children will spend lunchtime with the other children in the school.

- The Nurture team consists of two qualified Nurture Practitioners and an assistant practitioner. Two members of the team work within the Nurture Group at all times. The Nurture team are managed and supported by the SENDCo.
- In the absence of two members of the Nurture team being in school, it will not be possible for the group to function; therefore the children will remain in their mainstream classes and be supported.
- Every effort is made to ensure that Nurture staff are not required to cover absent colleagues.
- All children will attend school trips with their classes and forego their afternoon session in the Nurture Group.

### **3. Non-contact time**

Non-contact time will be required for the Nurture Group team to

- See parents
- Attend Nurture conferences
- Score Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires and Boxall Profiles
- Set individual children's targets
- Meet with class teachers to discuss targets and support them being used holistically across the school day
- Keep accurate records of progress, achievements and concerns
- Carry out observations
- Meet with SENDCo regularly
- Meet with other professionals
- Attend INSET
- Planning and preparation time - Nurture Practitioners will have half a day a week non-contact time

### **4. Training and support within school**

The Nurture Group will continue to offer specialised training, advice and support for colleagues across the school. A Nurture Group Network is currently established in Bracknell Forest.

### **5. Referral procedures**

- All referrals will be made in consultation and agreement with parents.
- Formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist is not a pre-requisite for admission, but consultation and discussion of relevant factors may be necessary.
- All referrals will be discussed with the SENDCo, Class Teacher and Nurture Team.
- A variety of assessment procedures will be used to inform referrals. These will include the Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, the Boxall Profile, observations and appropriate academic assessments.
- Parents will be kept fully informed about the outcomes of these assessments and meetings.

## **6. Entry/admission criteria**

Parental agreement is necessary for a child to access the Nurture Group.

Nurture Group placement will be considered for children who are underachieving for social, emotional, mental health (SEMH) or behavioural reasons. This may include children who are:

- very restless, find listening in the classroom a challenge, who are impulsive, are withdrawn and unresponsive and who have difficulty relating/communicating with adults and peers or who are struggling socially and emotionally with the school environment.

All children will have:

- Two Observations by a Nurture Practitioner; one in the classroom and one outside at playtime or lunchtime
- A Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire completed by the class teacher and scored by a Nurture Practitioner
- A Boxall Profile completed by the class teacher and scored by a Nurture Practitioner.

The information will be objectively assessed and reviewed by the Nurture team and SENDCo for the child's suitability to join the Nurture Group. Agreement must be gained from the parent(s) or carer(s) before a place is confirmed.

## **7. Arrangements for review of pupils**

- Each child will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Consultations with the Educational Psychologist and/or other professionals will be arranged, as appropriate, by the SENDCo.
- Formal reviews of the children will take place between the Nurture Practitioners and the SENDCo on a half termly basis.
- Formal reviews with parents will take place on a termly basis.

## **8. Reintegration/exit criteria**

- Reintegration will be planned with the SENDCo, parents, Class Teacher, Nurture Group team and other key adults.
- Where reintegration is not considered appropriate an alternative action plan will be agreed. This may involve consultation and assessments by professional outside agencies, via the SENDCo.

## **9. Parental links**

- All children attending the Nurture Group require support beyond those usually provided by the school. The school will work in partnership with parents. This will be achieved through formal reviews each term and more frequent informal discussions concerning the progress of the children.

- The Head Teacher, via the SENDCo, will be responsible for dealing with any complaints from parents. Complaints which remain unresolved will be referred through the school's normal procedures.

## **10. Role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the functioning of the Nurture Team within the school. The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- The operational management of the Nurture team
- Oversight of curriculum planning and monitoring of work
- Ensuring that the Nurture Group Team participates in the school's appraisal procedure
- Ensuring Health and Safety procedures are followed in accordance with the school's policy
- Ensuring that the Nurture Group operates within the guidelines of the LA's policy on equal opportunities and the school's SEND policy.

## **11. Role of the School SENDCO**

The SENDCo has responsibility for:

- Management of Nurture Group staff as members of the school community
- Day to day management of the Nurture team
- Oversight of planning and monitoring of work
- Monitoring of implementation of children's targets
- To support curriculum development
- Support with selection of children in to the Nurture Group
- Support the children's reintegration in to the classroom
- Meeting with parents and enable meetings with the Nurture Practitioners.
- Reviewing challenging cases and case studies for learning opportunities/further development, with the team
- Involvement in Nurture staff formal reviews as required
- Identifying and supporting Nurture staff training needs.

## **12. Role of the Nurture Group Practitioners**

The Nurture Group Practitioners are responsible for the day-to-day management of the group. They have the following duties:

- To maintain the Nurture principles – this is to provide consistent routines
- To offer a balance of learning and teaching, support and structure within a home-like atmosphere.
- Carry out observation as part of the assessment process
- Score and set termly, individual targets based on the Boxall Profile assessment
- To organise and plan the activities and curriculum of the Nurture room, bearing in mind the needs of the children.

- To keep records of individual children's progress.
- To liaise with other professionals when appropriate
- To actively work in partnership with parents
- To support teaching and support staff across the school
- To transfer knowledge through individual/group mentoring

The Nurture staff are supported by the SENDCo, Deputy Head Teacher and Head Teacher

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, governors and the SENDCo. Consistency is important in all aspects of school life. This policy sets out clear expectations for the Nurture Group and the team.

The purpose of monitoring the Nurture Group is to evaluate strengths, identify areas for development and further improve the quality of what we do. Some of this might be through the Performance Management process and at other times it might be as part of our ongoing cycle of self-evaluation linked to the School Development Plan (SDP). The quality of provision is monitored in a number of different ways. This may be through lesson observations, Learning Walks, scrutiny of planning and children's work/books and interviewing children.

We use Ofsted criteria as a benchmark to evaluate standards and provision.